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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY
Special Report

Whither Rhodesia?

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WHITHER RHODESIA?

"The white man is master of Rhodesia. He has built it and he intends to keep it."

Prime Minister Ian Smith

The white minority government in Salisbury remains firmly in power and determined to chart its own political course despite the efforts of the United Kingdom, directly and through the United Nations, to end the Rhodesian "rebellion." By 1969, in fact, Rhodesia's economy had recovered enough from economic sanctions to permit Prime Minister Ian Smith to forgo further talks with London. Early this year, the government implemented a republican constitution that severs all remaining ties with the British Crown and institutionalizes white rule. Although no government is likely to recognize Rhodesia's independence soon, sanctions are expected to become less and less effective as time goes on.



Smith and Acting President Proclaim Rhodesia a Republic

Africans today outnumber whites in Rhodesia by better than 20 to 1, yet most of them, notwithstanding their many real grievances, remain withdrawn and indifferent to politics. This is partly the result of stringent government security controls, but it is the case also because most Africans are still more concerned about scratching out a living from the soil than about what goes on in the country at large. The rapid growth of the African population, with resulting land shortages and rising urban unemployment, could eventually create severe social and political strains. These problems, however, may not become critical for a generation or more. Meanwhile, although guerrilla insurgency will probably continue intermittently, the nationalists do not pose a serious threat for the foreseeable future.

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RHODESIA MOVES FURTHER RIGHT

As long as Prime Minister Smith sought a negotiated settlement with the United Kingdom, Rhodesia's political future remained unclear. His decision last year to forgo further talks with the Wilson government and to proceed with a new constitution—approved by referendum in June 1969 and finally put into effect in March of this year—ended much of the uncertainty. The new constitution ensures continued white supremacy rule, short of revolution.

Rhodesian politics have always been to the right in the political spectrum, but the new constitution moves Rhodesia closer than ever before to the policy of separate racial development practiced by its neighbor, the Republic of South Africa. Under the 1961 constitution, eventual African majority rule was a possibility. The

RHODESIA: From Colony to Republic

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|---------------|---|
| November 1965 | Rhodesia unilaterally declares itself independent from the UK. |
| December 1966 | UN invokes selective mandatory economic sanctions against Rhodesia. |
| May 1968 | UN invokes comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions against Rhodesia. |
| June 1969 | Rhodesia's republican constitution is approved by referendum. |
| March 1970 | Rhodesia becomes a republic. |

present constitution provides for eventual parity between the races in the Rhodesian parliament, but it ensures that such parity is unattainable, possibly for centuries.

Accompanying the new constitution are a number of acts that sharply draw the lines between the races. Franchise qualifications, for example, are now based not only on property, income, and education, but for the first time on race as well. Europeans are restricted to voting only for European candidates, and Africans can vote only for African candidates. The Land Tenure Act divides the land almost equally between Rhodesia's 228,000 whites and its more than 4.8 million blacks. Although land holdings and constituencies were, in practice, already divided largely by race, these new measures make any constitutional change in a more liberal direction incomparably more difficult than before.

The constitution also gives the government normally powers it previously had only in times of emergency and only under parliamentary supervision, such as censorship and preventive detention without trial. Moreover, the bill of rights, originally designed by the British to protect African political and civil rights, is rendered meaningless by eliminating judicial review of constitutional questions.

This course, set by the ruling Rhodesia Front party, has the overwhelming approval of white voters. In fact, Rhodesia has become nearly a one-party state. The front won all 50 white constituency seats in 1965, and it will probably do so again in this month's general election. It is opposed by the moderate Centre Party, which supports multiracialism, and the ultrarightist Republican Alliance, which wants full apartheid. Neither party has appreciable support, and their chances of winning more than one or two seats are nil.

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The silent majority of Africans--80 percent of whom live in rural areas--take little part in national politics. Only about 8,000 Africans are even registered to vote. The African voice in parliament is muffled and ineffectual, with membership limited now to eight directly elected representatives and eight members selected by tribal chiefs and rural councils. Most Africans, in fact, are still governed by their tribal leaders, who in turn act as agents for the white government in Salisbury.

There is probably substantial residual support for the proscribed nationalist movements among blacks in urban areas. Fearful of the police and its ubiquitous network of informers, however, and disdainful of the few African parties that try to compete legally within the system, most supporters of the nationalists have withdrawn from politics altogether. Members of the small African elite in particular steer clear of antigovernment activity to avoid jeopardizing their relatively high-paying jobs in the white-controlled economy.

THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT

The closing of the US Consulate and other Western missions in March following Rhodesia's shift to republican status was a blow to the Smith government's hopes for early de facto recognition. South Africa and Portugal, whose assistance has prevented Rhodesia from being crippled by sanctions, continue to maintain close relations with Salisbury. Even they, however, are unlikely to extend formal recognition soon because it would only focus unwanted attention on themselves, particularly at the United Nations.

In the meantime, Rhodesia will probably concentrate mainly on expanding its commercial ties with other states.

assured Prime Minister Smith that trade relations will not be affected by the closing of their consulates. Even before that, France reportedly was encouraging some of its former African colonies, notably Gabon and the Malagasy Republic, to increase their trade ties with Rhodesia.

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A new round of negotiations with London is still possible, but this depends largely on whether the Conservative Party wins the general election that is expected in the UK later this year. There is a great deal of sympathy among party members, particularly among Conservative Party right-wingers, for their "kith and kin," the Rhodesian whites. Although party leaders would like to reach a settlement, even they would probably find the price too high. Smith is unlikely to concede much now in return for formal recognition and an end to sanctions because Rhodesia's economy is doing so well.

THE "ECONOMIC WAR"

Economic sanctions have fostered a kind of war psychology among Rhodesian whites since 1965, and reminders of this "economic war" are often heard from political leaders. The government still holds its economic statistics closely, and prosecutes offenders for disclosing trade data. Rather than bringing Rhodesia to terms, the sanctions have stiffened the resolve of most whites to resist and have united them solidly behind Prime Minister Smith and his government.

The trade embargo had its greatest impact in 1966. Tobacco, until then Rhodesia's largest foreign exchange earner, and some other agricultural products were particularly hard hit. Exports continued to decline slowly through 1968. Last year, however, the economy showed definite signs of recovery. National income rose for the third year in a row, and exports increased for the first time since Rhodesia declared itself independent.

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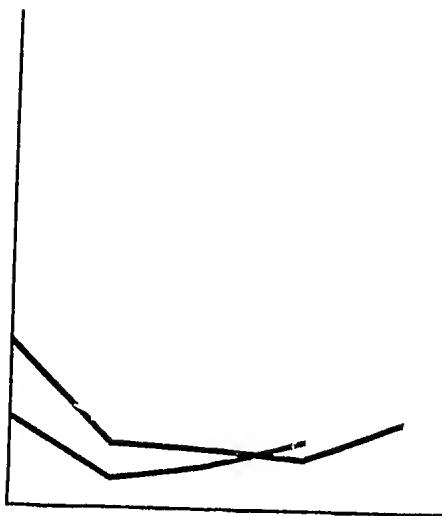
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This strong showing is in large part the result of booms in manufacturing and mining. Spurred by import restrictions, Rhodesia's manufacturing sector has diversified and expanded at a rapid pace in the last few years. Only the mining industry—which now produces asbestos, chrome, petalite, copper, pig iron, gold, and nickel—is expected to grow faster than manufacturing during the 1970s. The substantial increase in exports—perhaps as high as 20 percent above 1968—is probably attributable mainly to the growing skill of Rhodesian businessmen in evading economic sanctions. As the demand increases for Rhodesian goods, particularly mineral products, more and more holes are likely to appear in the sanctions dike. Similarly, the recent UN Security Council decision to extend mandatory sanctions to include Rhodesia's transport links with the outside world cannot be enforced effectively.

Some economic problems will continue to plague Rhodesia, however. Probably the most important of these is African unemployment. Between 36 and 40 thousand Africans leave school and enter the labor market each year, but the total number of jobs in the cash economy has changed little in the last decade. Employment will rise, now that the economy is beginning to grow again. It will not increase fast enough, however, to accommodate much of the growing labor supply as long as white labor unions, with the support of the government, continue to bar blacks from most skilled jobs. Unless more blacks are trained for the skilled and professional trades, moreover, shortages in skilled manpower will hold back economic development. This is a price, however, that the whites seem willing to pay.

One obvious partial solution to the lack of jobs is to encourage African peasants to turn from subsistence to cash-crop farming and to related industries. So far, however, the government has taken only modest steps in this direction. In 1968 it set up the Tribal Trust Development Corporation, which last year it gave \$580,000 for the development of feeder roads, irrigation projects, and marketing cooperatives. Rhodesian business leaders and the chairman of the corporation have indicated that much more will be needed if Africans are to be brought fully into the money economy and unemployment significantly alleviated. Whether the government is willing to commit more to this effort is doubtful.

GUERRILLA INSURGENCY

In January 1970, after a 16-month lull in guerrilla activity, a small group of Rhodesian nationalists crossed the Zambezi River from Zambia and attacked a border police post and the

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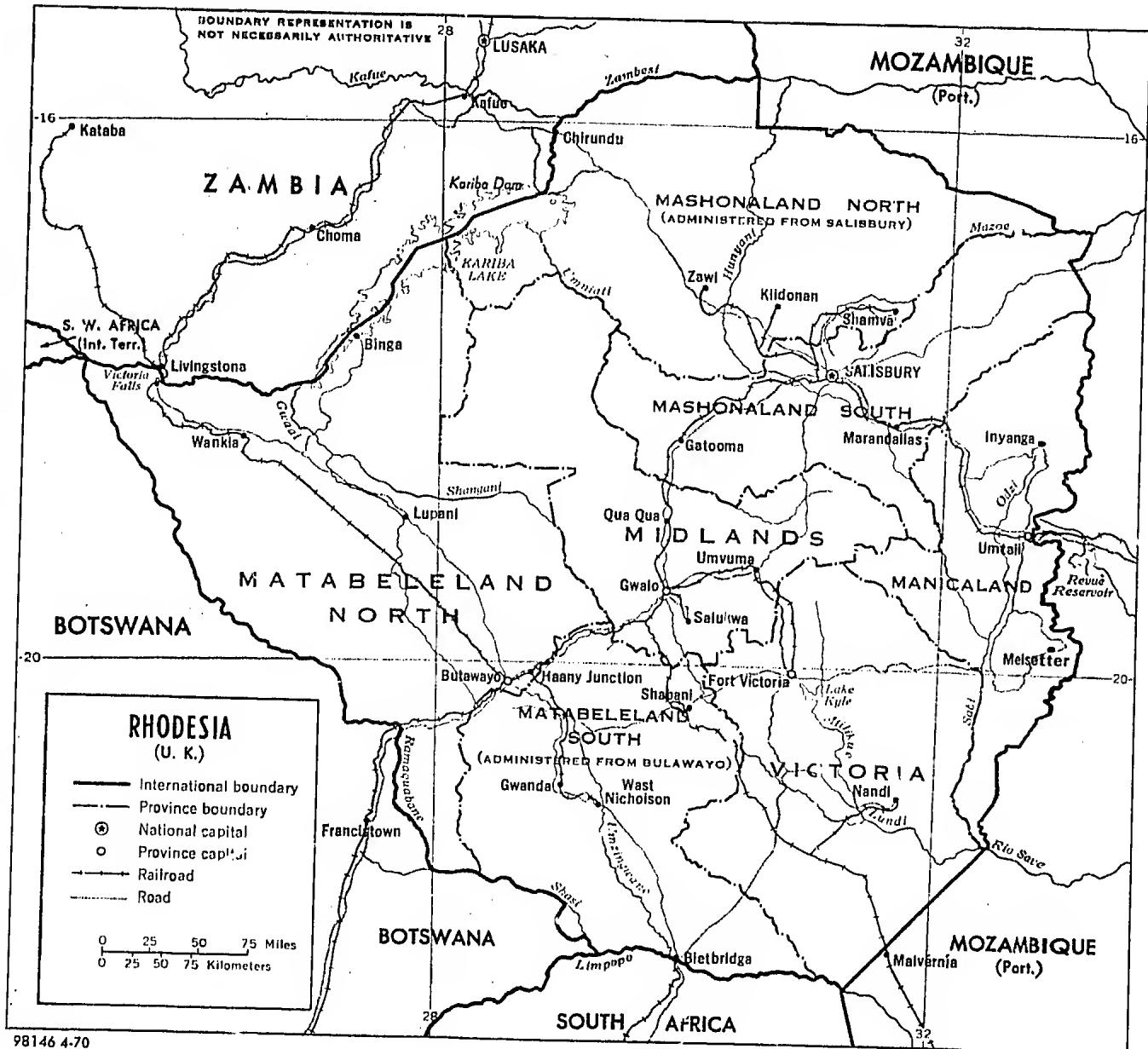
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Victoria Falls airport. Even though only one policeman was killed and only minor damage was inflicted on the airport, it was the nationalists' most dramatic and successful raid since insurgency began almost four years ago. Prime Minister Smith, under pressure to strike back militarily, for the first time publicly warned Zambia to discontinue its aid to the guerrillas. Although Rhodesian military forces could have wiped out the guerrillas' holding bases in Zambia, Smith was reluctant to order them into action because of the unfavorable publicity and international pressures that would result.

Subsequently, Rhodesian security forces killed or captured most of the raiding party and also part of another small group that tried to infiltrate at about the same time. A few of the guerrillas crossed into Botswana just ahead of pursuing police units, only to be promptly arrested by Botswana authorities. The outcome of this counterinsurgency operation illustrates the way the guerrilla war in Rhodesia has gone in the past and how it is likely to go for a long time to come.

OUTLOOK

Many observers consider Rhodesia a racial time bomb. They point to the already large ratio of blacks to whites, and to the fact that the African population will double in only 20 years. As a result, periodic food shortages and increasing pressures on available land in tribal areas are likely to grow more severe, and may lead to widespread rural unrest. In the cities, African discontent will be further intensified by rising unemployment. In the early 1960s, the nationalists drew extensive support from urban areas. When they resorted to violence, however, the government easily asserted its authority. Since then, the nationalists have been forced to operate largely from exile, and most of the rest of the African population has remained apathetic.

Rhodesian whites, consequently, are certain to retain a hammer lock on political power for the foreseeable future. In addition, the economy is now beginning to overcome the effects of sanctions, and will probably expand at a healthy rate during the 1970s.

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